

of statements last week, and then walking back the walk backs, it's impossible to keep up, and his behavior warrants a fresh evaluation of whether the President can be trusted with the future of the United States.

His apologists will argue that the current outcry is just another attempt by moderates and "establishment" Republicans to discredit the President. But what does this man have to say or do for his supporters to finally see that his actions are detrimental to the country?

We must put aside the GOP label, as hard as that may be, and demonstrate the leadership our country needs.

Trump's avowed respect for the word of a dictator who has spent decades undermining the U.S. and its allies is utterly dangerous. Putin is not our ally. Despite the President's dismal attempt to change the narrative by explaining that he misspoke in Helsinki, the pattern is clear: As a candidate and as President, he has constantly praised Putin just as he has constantly undercut the core of our democracy: the courts, the media, and the FBI. He has a history of discrediting members of his own Cabinet and the agencies they lead. These are not the actions of someone who should be navigating delicate diplomatic discussions and setting foreign policy.

If the President did genuinely misspeak on Monday, it demonstrates his inability to articulate accurately U.S. foreign policy at the highest level, for the highest stakes. As the leader of the free world—as ridiculous as that title sounds when applied to Trump—his words matter. If he cannot take his place at a podium next to an adversarial foreign leader and stand up for America's interests and principles, he should not be President.

Trump has alienated our true allies in Europe and undermined the United States' reputation as a consistent, reliable moral force for good in the world. He disdains democracies and admires dictatorships. What appears to matter to him is not what leaders represent but how they flatter him. North Korea's Kim Jong Un and Putin have cracked that code and fan Trump's ego in a way that respected heads of state do not.

Yet many Republicans continue to defend him. In this election year, opposing Trump is risky for GOP candidates. Invoking the need to choose country over party is an overused trope. But it is essential now.

The Republican majority in Congress can fully implement promised sanctions against Russia to show its opposition to Russia's meddling in our election. Putin needs economic growth in Russia because it benefits the oligarchy. Tougher, tangible sanctions would weaken him and hurt those who benefit from his power. House Speaker PAUL RYAN indicated earlier this week that additional sanctions were on the table. This would be a start.

Congress can also ensure that the Robert S. Mueller, III, investigation is not compromised. Any interference in it after this week should raise many red flags. The special counsel and his team, who, despite the President's attacks, show every sign of unbiased professionalism, need to finish their work without tampering.

Finally, even if the Russian efforts to undermine State voting systems were unsuccessful in 2016, this is a vulnerability that may be exploited in the future. With the help of Congress, States must strengthen their processes and security to stop future meddling from Russia or other foreign actors.

Republican voters, including those who supported Donald Trump, have the obligation to demand action from their elected officials. Vocal opposition is expected from Democrats, but it is Republicans' disapproval that will have the most sway on Capitol Hill and at the White House.

Those Members of the party in Congress who have stood up to the President should be commended. More must follow, with more than private talk and tepid tweets. Only bold leadership can put the United States back on a path that values freedom and democracy, and truly puts America first.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until noon today.

Accordingly (at 10 o'clock and 35 minutes a.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1200

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker at noon.

PRAYER

Imam Seyed Ali Ghazvini, Islamic Cultural Center of Fresno, Fresno, California, offered the following prayer:

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim, in the name of God, the compassionate, the merciful, Almighty God, I thank You for having led me to this great Nation, whose history of welcoming immigrants makes it possible for me to give today's prayer. I thank You for inspiring our Founding Fathers and the governments that followed to acknowledge civil liberties and minority rights.

I ask You, God, to bless the Members of this Hall, and I pray that You continue to inspire our elected officials so that their decisions meet Your approval. I pray that You inspire them to continue to uphold the democratic values of fairness and compassion that have made our Nation great, so that no one seeking refuge from war is banned from stepping on our soil based on faith affiliation or race, so that desperate families seeking refuge are not separated.

God, empower our lawmakers to promote peace, starting in our own cities and emanating to the rest of the world.

Amen.

THE JOURNAL

The SPEAKER. The Chair has examined the Journal of the last day's proceedings and announces to the House his approval thereof.

Pursuant to clause 1, rule I, the Journal stands approved.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The SPEAKER. Will the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER) come forward and lead the House in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Mr. SCHNEIDER led the Pledge of Allegiance as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Repub-

lic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

WELCOMING IMAM SEYED ALI GHAZVINI

The SPEAKER. Without objection, the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) is recognized for 1 minute.

There was no objection.

Mr. COSTA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today and it is my honor and privilege to welcome Imam Ghazvini as the guest chaplain to the United States House of Representatives.

For the past 14 years, Seyed Ali Ghazvini has served as imam, or spiritual leader, of the Islamic Cultural Center in Fresno, a very important Islamic center in the San Joaquin Valley.

In addition to leading prayers and Qur'anic study, the Imam Ghazvini has distinguished himself as a prominent, prominent community leader. Since the beginning of his ministry, the imam has worked intently to facilitate meaningful interfaith dialogue and understanding throughout the valley, among all religions.

As the co-chair of the Interfaith Alliance of Central California, he has brought together numerous religious and social justice organizations to host mixed-faith events and spread tolerance and inclusivity throughout the San Joaquin Valley. I know because I have had the wonderful pleasure and honor to participate.

It has been with great honor, again, that many of us who have been able to participate in these interdenominational meetings have witnessed a renewed commitment to social justice firsthand. I urge my colleagues to welcome me in joining him and in thanking him this morning for his opening prayer.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. NORMAN). The Chair will entertain up to 15 further requests for 1-minute speeches on each side of the aisle.

PLANO CHAMBER OF COMMERCE AWARDED 2018 CHAMBER OF THE YEAR

(Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SAM JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I am proud to say that the cities of north Texas are frequently named some of the best places to live in the whole country. Of course, this is no surprise to the folks who live there.

There are many reasons that north Texas continues to draw people and businesses to the area. These reasons include good schools and low taxes, but people are also attracted to our business-friendly environment. In fact, just last week, the Plano Chamber of Commerce was nationally recognized as the